

# PSAP FUNDING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 3, 2005  
1:00PM

Crowne Plaza Richmond  
555 E. Canal Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Members Present: Robert Woltz  
Linda Cage  
Pat Shumate  
Bill Agee  
Melissa McDaniel  
Sherri Bush

Members absent: Gary Critzer

Staff Present: Steve Marzolf, Coordinator  
Dorothy Spears-Dean, Analyst  
Terry Mayo, Administrative Assistant

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Robert Woltz called the meeting of the PSAP Funding Subcommittee to order at 1:06PM. He welcomed everyone, and said this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and hope that this subcommittee will be able to come to a conclusion that the staff has been asked to pull together for this meeting. Mr. Woltz called for the approval of the February 23, 2005 minutes. Ms. Cage made a motion, seconded by Mr. Agee, that the minutes be approved; approved 5-0-0.

## **DISCUSS FUNDING STRATEGY ALTERNATIVES**

Mr. Woltz asked Mr. Marzolf to review the funding alternatives discussed at the previous meeting for providing assistance to the localities. There seven possibilities that were captured in the minutes:

- PSAP Consolidation
- Centralized Procurement
- Assistance to Localities
- Appropriate Funding Formula
- Automatic Pass-through Funding
- Personnel Minimums
- GIS/Support Personnel

## **PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION:**

### *PSAP Consolidation*

Mr. Woltz began the discussion by referencing an email the committee received expressing concern about discussing PSAP consolidation. Mr. Woltz said his recollection of the discussion at the previous meeting was that there was concern that smaller PSAPs were not going to be able to replace or maintain equipment because current funding formulas require significant local resources that many of these localities lack. As a result, one approach was to look at how the Board could provide additional funding for such costs. Another approach was to look at consolidation of PSAPs to maximize local resources. Bill Agee pointed out that this impacts not only wireless equipment, but also wireline, which in many cases in these smaller PSAPs was also funded larger from the Board.

Mr. Woltz said a problem of critical mass is what we really are talking about. The basic question is what is the minimum cost to run a small PSAP and how does the locality generate sufficient revenue to fund it. Some of these small localities do not have the tax base to generate enough revenue from traditional funding sources to maintain all of the equipment now required in the PSAP. Unless this problem is solved, there is going to be a major problem in replacing equipment, etc. in the coming years. Mr. Marzolf said that staff could conduct a study of this issue to quantify the problem and propose solutions.

### *Centralize Procurement*

Mr. Marzolf presented the concept of centralized procurement and said that it would be modeling after what VITA and other state E-911 programs have done with multi-vendor contracts. In addition to potentially reducing costs 15%-30%, Mr. Marzolf said it would also help in the tracking and problem solving for PSAPs. As newer versions of software or equipment are released, staff can help the PSAPs/localities determine the need for upgrade. Mr. Woltz asked if there was any opposition to this concept from the committee or audience present, which there was not.

### *PSAP Assistance*

Mr. Marzolf presented and the committee discussed three options for providing assistance to PSAPs on an ongoing basis. The options were to continue providing outside assistance by using existing project management programs; the PSAPs obtain their own assistance and are reimbursed at 100%, or expand the Public Safety Communications Division to include regional offices.

### *Appropriate Formula*

Mr. Marzolf gave a brief overview of the cost impact each possible funding formula would have on mapping maintenance costs for FY2006. This impact was calculated based on the descriptions entered by each PSAP on their submission. Some PSAPs did not ask for mapping maintenance or did not split it out so the amounts shown were only estimates. Maintenance costs for call accounting systems were also presented but were grossly underreported since this cost is often included with CPE maintenance. No estimate was provided for replacement costs since insufficient data was available to make a projection.

### *Automatic Funding*

Mr. Marzolf recommended that an automatic funding formula not be considered at this time since it will require a significant legislative change to accomplish and thus goes well beyond a simple change to the Board's funding policies.

### *Personnel Minimums/GIS and Support Personnel*

Mr. Marzolf provided cost information to help answer the question of whether \$30,000 was sufficient to hire a dispatcher. After showing that based on the current dispatcher funding from the Compensation Board that \$30,000 is sufficient, Mr. Marzolf advised the committee that the bigger issue seemed to be that at \$30,000 nothing beyond the dispatcher's salary could be funded. With all of the personnel funding going to the dispatcher, no funding was available for GIS and other IT support personnel. He recommended that the committee may want to consider a minimum level of funding for IT support services to include GIS. Rather than simply increasing the minimum from \$30,000 to \$40,000, Mr. Marzolf suggested the minimum should be independent of the dispatcher's salary so that it can be targeted to IT/GIS support. Above the minimums, the committee discussed that funding for GIS support, which has been limited to internal staff assigned to the PSAP, be expanded to cover internal and external personnel costs associated with maintaining GIS data in the PSAP as well as other IT support services. These costs could be included with the other personnel cost already funded to the wireless percentage.

Mr. Marzolf reminded the committee that there was also an issue of the director's salary that was inadvertently left out of his presentation. Currently, the director/coordinator's salary can only be included if they have no responsibilities other than the PSAP. This was done to prevent the claiming the salaries (or portions thereof) of multiple managers that supervise the PSAP up the chain of command. However, the result was that some PSAPs were unable to claim any director's salary since the director had other duties in addition to the PSAP even if the PSAP was the primary responsibility.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Mr. Marzolf summarized the recommendation of the Subcommittee as follows:

- The committee has found that some PSAPs will likely have funding problems when it comes time to replacement the equipment originally funded by the Board at 100%. The committee recommends that Public Safety Communications (PSC) Division staff assist with identifying the localities and PSAPs that may have this issue and support them with preparing for it.
- The committee recommends that staff survey PSAPs to determine the interest for centralized contracts for individual products and services and whether that interest is sufficient to make them worthwhile. If justified, staff should execute contracts for equipment and service similar to exiting VITA contracts.
- The committee has found that several PSAPs will need ongoing assistance to maintain their wireless E-911 deployment. Therefore, the committee

recommends that the Board endorse, to the CIO, the concept of three regional offices to provide direct PSC Division staff support to the PSAPs on an ongoing basis. Though the Board does not have the authority to add staff, the CIO can.

- In the area of the appropriate formula, the committee has determined that the current formula for maintenance is still valid; however, replacement costs will be an issue for large and small PSAPs moving forward. Though no changes are recommended at this time, the Board will need to work with the PSAPs and the General Assembly to proactively address the issue of sufficient funding for PSAPs. The committee suggests that the Board may want to consider an on-going group to monitor this issue.
- The committee has determined that \$30,000 is sufficient for the intended purpose of being able to hire an additional dispatcher; however, that there is insufficient funding for other required personnel costs to support information technology costs including GIS. The committee recommends that the current allowance for GIS personnel costs be expanded to include all IT support services from both internal and external staff and a second minimum of \$10,000 be established for those costs. These IT support service costs could simply be added to the PSAP's existing personnel costs, which are also funded at the wireless percentage of total calls, but the \$10,000 minimum would be accounted for separately to ensure adequate funding for the support function.
- The committee recommends that one director's salary can be included in each PSAP's personnel costs even if they have other responsibilities outside the PSAP. This will allow each PSAP to get the wireless percentage of funding for their director, coordinator, manager or similar job title.

Ms. Cage made a motion, seconded by Mr. Agee, to make the above recommendations to the Board implemented each for the FY2006 funding cycle with the exception of the director's salary (last bullet), which can be claimed during the FY2005 true-up; approved 6-0-0.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to be discussed, Mr. Woltz thanked everybody for coming to this subcommittee meeting. Mr. Robert Woltz adjourned the meeting at 5:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Terry D. Mayo  
Administrative Assistant  
Public Safety Communications

Approved by subcommittee: \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)